the action expressed by a subordinate clause is related in time to the speaker and not to the action of the main clause, e.g. azt hallottam, hogy beteg 'I heard he is sick.' Hungarian also omits van and vannak ('is' and 'are') in equational sentences. Ex.: A ház szép 'the house [is] beautiful' A házak szépek 'the houses [are] beautiful.' 193

The Hungarian word order is almost as flexible as that of the classical languages and offers thereby the same rhetorical advantages.

Like French or German, Hungarian differentiates between polite and familiar speech. The pronouns corresponding to vous or sie are maga-maguk, ön-önök, or kend-kendek; those corresponding to tu and du are te and ti. The use of these pronouns and of the corresponding verb forms varies between city and country. In the cities, the familiar form is used among close relatives, good friends, immediate associates at work, and with children; the polite form is to be used with people of age or prestige and among strangers. In the country, the polite form is restricted within the family and among good friends; it is also used when speaking to strangers of authority; the familiar forms are used among children and teenagers, and among casual acquaintances if the person spoken to is younger or obviously on a lower social level. 195

important criterion, its narrative character. And the everyday speech of the people is characterized by conscious, or at least instinctive, search after and selection of form. Some people (usually the older ones) have set forms they use in telling of certain events. These are usually only the constantly recurring peculiarities of one person, but sometimes they become common property in the sense that others use them too. They become primitive proverbs or illustrative anecdotes. In this manner we have an almost unbroken line of gradual development from the most ordinary conversation to the story or anecdote.

The borderline between the more developed forms of everyday conversation and the actual literary forms of the folk epic is reached when the speaker becomes aware that he is now performing for the entertainment of an audience. /2/ Since we have only one generally applicable term to denote artistry with words, I may call this awareness the "literary awareness of the people." This consists of the speaker assuming the demeanor of the performer, and his hearers becoming an audience. This dividing line is felt by the community, and it is given expression in quite a simple manner.

I can elucidate with examples what I want to say.

First of all, I wish to point out how the people try to make their everyday speech more colorful, more vivid, more "poetic." 195 538

I used to chat with an old man who took part in the war as a militiaman; he used to yarn about his wartime memories. I would sound certain chords at random, and he would always recount his memories in the same set form: "When we paraded on the pasture at Cinkota." Or, "We had a sergeant, by name of Kraculák, may God rest his soul (I am telling this after his death), but I never had a bad word out of him in sixteen months."

Or, in speaking about the struggles of his youth: "When I became a servant at Dombó, two carriages came after me, though even one could have taken my paraphernalia. I was there for eleven months, and they came after me with five carriages."

We could quote many similar examples from his yarns, or from those of others. But he had recounted these stories often, and he had always tried to tell them in the most expressive form (the paraphernalia he acquired at Dombo in a year); these forms had proven to be the best, and they became set. Even in their accounts of events of lesser significance and in their most common everyday conversation, we find them trying to achieve the same. But the forms born everyday in this manner do not crystallize to become set

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538 forms, since the next day they must yield their place to other expressions.

But they spice their everyday speech by using the set expressions of other people, usually citing them by name. In a small circle, these expressions become common property.

The same old man used to quote from the sayings of rich, haughty Auntie Kata Szé (1): "Auntie Kata Szé used to say, 'When I was born, God had a well-set table.'" They also quote by name the saying of a long-dead village notary to his shiftless sons: "You will become nothing more than door-handle-pushers."

Often such a saying becomes much-quoted because of one queerly pronounced word. For instance, Pali R. once said concerning his nieces: "It 's a pistol they need, a pistol!" [Tr. Note: orig. 'piszo.']

Sometimes recounting some more interesting event brings up some such anecdote bound to a person's name. In telling each other of their adventures in the forest, they would recount the following little event that happened to Antal V. While Antal V. was bringing wood from the forest, his axe-handle broke. As he was still in the forest, he cut down a nice little tree for an axe-handle. The noise brought the forester over. Antal V. defended himself, saying that he had only cut the little tree because his axe-handle had broken.

Said the forester to him: "How dare you cut down a tree here?"

"Well, I can't cut one in the hempfield."

"Did you get permission for this from the prince's offices?" [3]

"Well, that's not where it broke."

Thereupon the forester went away as though he had been slapped in the face. (This last formula is one that is frequently used as the punch line of such anecdotes.)

They tell about the afore-mentioned Auntie Kata Szé that she once asked the threshers - to whom the farmer used to give food - what they wanted for lunch, since she could serve them anything. One of the threshers said she should make egg-barley out of dry dough. But this she could not make.

These are already anecdotes of a modest nature, but they have no independent existence. They are not told as independent, amusing stories. No description of the situation, such as that above, usually precedes the telling of the anecdote concerning Antal V. because they are just talking about their own similar adventures in the forest. Or they tell it when Antal V. 's roguishness has been mentioned. They tell similar anecdotes with a more general identification of those

involved, as "about the man from Dómba," or in an even more general form "about a man of a certain time," "about a woman of a certain time." 195• 538

These forms, precisely because their content hides a moral, usually play the role of proverbs. But these minor anecdotes are also of an entertaining nature and, as their entertaining purpose is strengthened and their content is broadened, they tend to become independent anecdotes.

From the same starting point we can also arrive at the proverbs. In their everyday speech people try to express what they have to say in a tight, brief structure, and if they succeed in finding some good expression, then it becomes a set one. Those of the forms which circulate in a restricted circle are just the expressions of one person. If others take them up, then they quote him by name. The more general the validity of the truth contained in such a saying, the more people take it up and use it. Thus we find, almost without any skipping, all of the intermediary forms between such more set formulations of everyday speech and the generally known proverbs.

For instance, old Ignác P. used to say about himself: "I never was one to make work." /Literally: "I never was sire to work."/

Old Pali B. used to quote what he heard from a lady as she instructed her daughter: "She would always tell her, 'My girl, start small, finish large.'"

When one goes to do one's official errands, one has no way of knowing when one will finish. This is expressed by the following form: "Who goes before the masters doesn't know when he is coming home."

The manservant lives with the family, eats and works with its members, but usually his lot is not the best. This form characterizes that situation: "Soup keeps the servant; oaths and curses, the master."

Old Ignác P. expresses his peasant's consciousness with this saying: "The good citizen (wealthier farmer) is like a willow stump, they trim him, in time he buds, and then he gives a nice shade."

These two have become proverbs already:

"He is a man just like what the drill throws up, neither wood nor shaving."

"One can tell from which milk the curds are made."

Essentially, the real proverb does not differ from these; e.g. "Every bag finds its patch."

•195 /4/ Such are the proverbs of the people. They do not quote them sep-
538 arately using them only to illuminate or lend color to some passage in their speech. And they use them to a greater extent than the generally known proverbs.

Wanderers, youths who, as blacksmiths or millers or soldiers, have been to the city, bring back with them from there some slang sayings, such as "Are we going on foot or by sewing-machine?", or "Good-day to you, glad to see," etc. The other youths learn these sayings from them, and whereas this certainly gives them a certain amount of interest, especially in the eyes of the girls, the sayings do not become an integral part of their folk heritage, but die out in a few years.

Our less long-winded city "jokes," to which the daily newspapers treat us every day, are almost entirely unknown to them. They do take up one or two of the anecdotes of the calendars which are particularly applicable to them.

On the other hand, the various types of proverbs and anecdotes form a significant part of their everyday speech. In fact, their use is a sign of assimilation into the group, and of efforts made in that
[56] direction. The region of Tolna and Baranya where I collected my materials is an area of mixed nationality. Those Germans who are being assimilated or who are sympathetic use these forms consciously. This consciousness is evident even in their facial expressions and tone of voice, until complete assimilation has occurred. The use or avoidance of these forms is a measure of the blending and in-feeling or of the extent to which they are set apart, respectively, of the railroad men and factory workers living in the villages.

The frontier of the literary awareness of the people is found in approximately this region. Everything mentioned so far is incidental
539 to the everyday speech of the people. But the following, still modest anecdote is told for the prupose of providing entertainment. (Told by József Ács, farmer of Gerényes, Baranya county, aged 63.)

King Mátyás one day assigned his engineers to measure Mt. Gellért, to see how many bushels it would make. He gave them a month's measuring, that is a month's time; otherwise he would strip them of their diplomas, or ranks, if they could not measure it.

On the last day, as they went to measure, they met a gipsy. Of course, their hopes were lost. Said the gipsy: "Hey, gentlemen, give me a little piece of a cigar."

The chief engineer said to him: "As though we were in the mood to smoke cigars! Not that we have any cigars!"

So he said: "What is bothering the gentlemen that they are so 539
sad; perhaps I could help."

The chief engineer brought himself to tell the gipsy of the task that King Mátyás had assigned to them.

The gipsy said: "But, gentlemen, the whole thing is simple. Tell King Mátyás that if the bushel were larger than the mountain, then it wouldn't even make one."

Now, of course, there appeared not only pieces of cigars but even whole cigars.

The chief engineer reported to King Mátyás that they had finished with the measuring.

(5) "Well, if you have finished, tell me how many bushels it makes."

Said the chief engineer: "Your majesty, if the bushel were larger than the mountain, it wouldn't even make one."

"Well, I know that you learned this from some gipsy."

Such an anecdote has an independent existence. There are, of course, external conditions for its presentation (congenial company for some protracted period, etc.). Riddles exist almost entirely in this form.

The external signs of consciousness are visible to the eye, and 538
they could be an indication of the artistic value of what is to be re- 195.
counted. Something like "Well, I'll tell one too" is sufficient introduction for posing a riddle or telling an anecdote. Story-telling requires care in laying the groundwork. The story-teller must be called and asked to tell a story. The child, too, asks for a story. Sometimes there exists only this external circumstance: that the mood requires a story. And if at such a time there is not a professional story-teller in the company, then the one who can do so best, tells the story.

The most restricted literary form of the folk epic is the ballad. 538
In addition to its inner rigidities, its outer form is fixed, too. The groundwork for this must be laid with even greater care than for the story. But it is as though the wind of culture had already swept away this literary form. Only on the rarest occasions is there that elevated mood which is necessary for the singing of ballads. Some old men 533
and women do know very beautiful ballads, but they sing them only on the rarest occasions. Sometimes at a festival or a wedding feast they ask an old singer to sing some old songs, and then he will sing some ballads too, but always solo. As far as my memory serves me, they have never sung ballads in chorus in this region.

The texts of folk customs are classed mostly as lyrical and